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The situation in the Middle East

Question of Palestine

Security Council
Sixty-second year

Identical letters dated 16 May 2007 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Following my conversation with the Secretariat last evening, I write to inform you of the highly distressing and appalling number of rockets launched by Palestinian terrorists in the Gaza Strip at Israeli communities in the south over the past week.

From Wednesday, 9 May 2007, through yesterday, Tuesday, 15 May 2007, Palestinian terrorists fired 52 Qassam rockets and mortar shells at Israel. Yesterday alone, 20 rockets landed in the southern city of Sderot. During the course of the day, 30 people were injured from the attacks, among them a mother, seriously wounded, and her 4-year-old son, moderately wounded. A number of private homes as well as public buildings and property sustained considerable damage. Hamas — which is represented in the Palestinian government by numerous ministers, including the Prime Minister — claimed responsibility for the attacks.

Since November 2006, Palestinian terrorists have repeatedly and egregiously violated the ceasefire. The continuation of violence gravely endangers the stability and security of the region. Hamas must relinquish its terrorist platform, and embrace its responsibilities as enumerated by the Quartet, to recognize Israel, renounce violence and terror, and abide by previous agreements.

It cannot be ignored that the terrorist attacks against Israel outside the Gaza Strip occurred during another disturbing round of inter-Palestinian violence inside the Gaza Strip. Yesterday's internal clashes between Palestinian factions, who claim to be unified under a so-called unity government, resulted in the death and injury of countless Palestinian civilians. There is no doubt that the attacks against Israel were an attempt to divert attention away from the infighting, and artificially unite the Palestinian factions under a banner of attacking Israel.

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Israel will not tolerate these relentless rocket attacks. As Hamas continues to provoke, stir violence, and perpetrate terror, Israel is ready to take whatever measures are necessary to prevent them and safeguard and defend the lives of its citizens. Israel reserves the right to exercise and act in self-defence, as any other nation would if faced with this intolerable situation.

Israel urges the international community to do everything in its power to support an end to the Palestinian terror campaign against Israel.

I should be grateful if you would circulate this letter as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 13 and 14, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Daniel **Carmon**
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.